

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1579
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 10433

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, PINS, CSCE, SHUM, UR
SUBJECT: INHIBITING DISSENT: PRESSURE TACTICS
SHORT OF ARREST

REF: MOSCOW 8283(NOTAL)

SUMMARY: INSTEAD OF ARREST, SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAVE
USED TECHNIQUES SUCH AS PRESSURE ON FAMILY MEMBERS AND
WITHDRAWAL OF MOSCOW RESIDENCY AUTHORIZATION TO INHIBIT
DISSIDENT ACTIVITIES. CASES OF SLEPAK, BEGUN,
TVERDOKHLEBOV AND PODRABINEK ILLUSTRATE SUCCESS SOVIETS
HAVE HAD USING TECHNIQUES SHORT OF DIRECT ARREST IN
INHIBITING SOME OF THEIR MORE COURAGEOUS OPPONENTS. END
SUMMARY.

1. SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAVE A WIDE VARIETY OF MEANS AT
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THEIR DISPOSAL SHORT OF DIRECT REPRESSION TO ERECT
PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS TO REFUSENIK AND
HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISM. OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT SINCE THE
CURRENT CRACK-DOWN AGAINST DISSIDENCE BEGAN IN EARLY
1977, THEY HAVE EXPERIMENTED WITH AN ASSORTMENT OF THESE
TECHNIQUES, VARYING THEM WITH SUBSTANTIAL SUCCESS TO
FIT SPECIFIC CASES. THE CURRENT DEPRESSED, RELATIVELY

INACTIVE STATE OF THE REFUSENIK COMMUNITY (REFTEL) REFLECTS THIS SUCCESS. A REVIEW OF SEVERAL SPECIFIC CASES ILLUSTRATES HOW THE REGIME HAS BEEN ABLE TO DAMPEN THE ACTIVISM AND ENTHUSIASM OF SOME OF ITS MORE COURAGEOUS OPPONENTS.

2. VLADIMIR SLEPAK. SLEPAK'S SON REACHED DRAFT AGE DURING THE PAST YEAR AND RECEIVED HIS INDUCTION NOTICE. HE HAS REFUSED TO REPORT FOR INDUCTION BECAUSE MILITARY SERVICE WOULD ALMOST SURELY REQUIRE HIM TO WAIT AT LEAST FIVE YEARS AFTER DISCHARGE TO RECEIVE EXIT PERMISSION. HE IS NOW IN HIDING. THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES COULD ALMOST CERTAINLY LOCATE HIM IF THEY CHOSE. THEY HAVE APPARENTLY DECIDED, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, THAT THE PRESENT STATE OF SUSPENSE BETTER SERVES THEIR PURPOSES. BY HOLDING OVER VLADIMIR SLEPAK'S HEAD THE THREAT OF INDUCTING HIS SON, THEY MAY BE INHIBITING HIM MORE THAN IF THEY ACTUALLY CARRIED OUT THE THREAT. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBOFF, THE ELDER SLEPAK HAS EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN FOR HIS SON, WHOSE EXIT VISA CASE HE IS PURSUING AT THE MOMENT FAR MORE ACTIVELY THAN HIS OWN BECAUSE HE IS CONVINCED THAT THE DRAFT EVASION CHARGE WILL BE MOOT IF A FAVORABLE DECISION IS TAKEN ON THE EXIT VISA APPLICATION. ALTHOUGH SLEPAK HIMSELF DOES NOT THINK THAT HIS BEHAVIOR HAS CHANGED BECAUSE OF THE THREAT TO HIS SON, AND HE IS STILL LOOKED UPON AS A LEADER OF MOSCOW'S REFUSENIK

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COMMUNITY, OUR IMPRESSION IS THAT FOR SOME MONTHS PAST HE HAS LIMITED HIMSELF MORE TO PARTICIPATING IN, THAN INITIATING ACTIVITIES.

3. IOSIF BEGUN. BEGUN'S TERM OF EXILE ENDED ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO, BUT HE HAS NOT BEEN PERMITTED TO RESIDE IN MOSCOW. HE LIVED IN THE CITY BRIEFLY, BUT WAS TOLD TO MOVE OUT OR FACE ARREST. WE ARE NOT CERTAIN WHERE HE NOW LIVES, BUT THE PROCESS OF FINDING A LEGITIMATE DOMICILE HAS APPARENTLY KEPT HIM SUFFICIENTLY PREOCCUPIED SINCE HIS RELEASE THAT HE HAS NOT, TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, ENGAGED IN ANY SIGNIFICANT REFUSENIK ACTIVITIES.

4. ANDREY TVERDOKHLEBOV. TVERDOKHLEBOV'S CASE IS SIMILAR TO BEGUN'S. HE HAS NOT BEEN PERMITTED TO RESUME RESIDENCE IN MOSCOW SINCE HIS RETURN FROM EXILE IN JANUARY. ALTHOUGH HE HAS SINCE THEN REPLACED VLADIMIR ALBREKHT AS SECRETARY OF MOSCOW'S AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER, WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY ACTIVITIES HE HAS UNDERTAKEN. HE WAS PICKED UP BY THE MILITIA AT ONE POINT FOR RESIDING ILLEGALLY IN MOSCOW AND RELEASED, APPARENTLY AFTER AGREEING TO MOVE OUT OF TOWN. ALBREKHT RECENTLY OFFERED TO INTRODUCE

AN EMBOFF TO TVERDOKHLEBOV, BUT SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, WHEN EMBOFF AGAIN SAW HIM OUTSIDE SYNAGOGUE IN MOSCOW, ALBREKHT HAD STILL NOT BEEN IN CONTACT WITH TVERDOKHLEBOV, A FACT WHICH ILLUSTRATES THE PHYSICAL BARRIERS TO SIMPLE COMMUNICATION, NOT TO MENTION EFFECTIVE ACTIVITY, WHICH THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES CAN ERECT SIMPLY BY CANCELLING MOSCOW RESIDENCY RIGHTS AND CUTTING OFF TELEPHONES. THE AUTHORITIES ARE INSISTING THAT BEGUN AND TVERDOKHLEBOV LIVE AT LEAST 100 KILOMETERS FROM MOSCOW.

5. ALEKSANDR PODRABINEK. PODRABINEK REFUSED TO EMIGRATE

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FROM THE SOVIET UNION, EVEN WHEN FACED WITH PROSPECT THAT HIS BROTHER WOULD BE JAILED ON TRUMPED-UP FIREARM POSSESSION CHARGES (AS SUBSEQUENTLY HAPPENED). DURING INVESTIGATION INTO THOSE CHARGES, PODRABINEK WAS FOLLOWED TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY. HE SAYS THAT AS A RESULT HE LOST HIS JOB AND WAS FORCED TO LEAVE HIS TEMPORARY MOSCOW LODGINGS, WHICH EFFECTIVELY PUT HIM OUT OF TOUCH WITH HIS DISSIDENT COLLEAGUES. NOW, FOUR MONTHS LATER, HE HAS AGAIN FOUND A JOB IN MOSCOW AND A PLACE TO STAY, BUT THE MOMENTUM OF HIS DISSIDENT ACTIVITY HAS SLACKENED AND HIS LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE PSYCHIATRIC WATCH COMMITTEE HAS BEEN NEUTRALIZED, AT LEAST TEMPORARILY. ALTHOUGH

PODRABINEK IS APPARENTLY UNAFRAID OF IMPRISONMENT, (WHILE ALSO RELUCTANT TO GIVE AUTHORITIES ANY EXCUSE TO JAIL HIM ON PARASITISM OR ILLEGAL RESIDENCE CHARGES), HIS ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN CURTAILED BY PERSONAL HARASSMENT, AS WELL, PERHAPS, AS BY CONCERN THAT HE MAY BE INVOLUN-
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TARILY DEPORTED AND THAT HIS ACTIVITIES MAY WORSEN THE TREATMENT HIS BROTHER RECIVES IN PRISON.

6. SOVIETS ARE STILL PREPARED TO USE ARREST OR DEPORTATION AGAINST ACTIVISTS THEY ARE NOT ABLE TO INHIBIT BY OTHER MEANS. RECENT SUCH DEPORTEES INCLUDE DINA BEILINA AND VALENTIN TURCHIN. ARREST AND CONVICTION STILL SEEM TO BE PREFERRED MEANS OF DEALING WITH DISSIDENTS BASED IN CITIES OTHER THAN MOSCOW. MOSCOW'S DISSIDENTS OFTEN FACE INSTEAD OF DIRECT ARREST A MORE SUBTLE ARRAY OF ACTIVITIES--PRESSURE AGAINST OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS, JOB LOSS, WITH RESULTANT THREATS OF PARASITISM CHARGES, AND LOSS OF MOSCOW RESIDENCY PERMITS, CAUSING EITHER SUBSTANTIAL LOSS OF CONTACT WITH OTHER ACTIVISTS OR POSSIBLE ILLEGAL RESIDENCE CHARGES--WHICH FOR THE PRESENT AT LEAST HAVE HAD APPRECIABLE SUCCESS IN INHIBITING DISSIDENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVITIES. TOON

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